

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

HON. RAY LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. LAHOOD. Madam Speaker, during the last several years, I have had the honor and pleasure to work with the National Endowment for the Arts. I have been impressed with their energy, passion, and integrity in connection with their pursuit to bring arts excellence to America. I would like to discuss a few of the programs which have been so important to our communities and which were brought to us by the National Endowment for the Arts.

I'll start with Shakespeare in American Communities. Since its inception in 2003, the program has brought live, high quality Shakespeare performances to more than 2,000 communities in all 50 states. Sixty-five professional theater companies have participated in the largest tour of Shakespearean theater in American history. They have reached audiences of 1 million—focusing on high school students—and have distributed 55,000 sets of exemplary educational materials—free to any teacher.

Poetry Out Loud is a national poetry recitation contest for high school students that was conducted in partnership with all 50 State arts agencies; 150,000 students were engaged in learning and reciting poetry and \$50,000 was awarded annually in scholarship funds to winning students.

The NEA Jazz Masters program has expanded exponentially under the leadership of Chairman Dana Gioia. Designed to honor the best and most innovative jazz musicians and advocates, the Jazz Masters award has become the nation's highest honor in jazz. An NEA Jazz Masters on Tour commenced, and a curriculum was developed for high school teachers—NEA Jazz in the Schools—celebrating the story of jazz in a classroom-friendly format for music, civics, social studies, and U.S. history classes. The agency has produced a special commemorative recording of the music of 27 Jazz Masters, developed with National Public Radio a series of documentaries profiling honorees, and launched on public television the "Legends of Jazz" program—a series of conversations with Jazz Masters.

Through the American Masterpieces initiative, the Endowment has given grants to organizations to bring the best of our cultural and artistic legacy to Americans. Through this program they have supported the disciplines of visual arts, dance, musical theater, presenting choral music, and chamber music. State arts councils have shared in this program by supporting their indigenous master artists and art forms.

One program which we should be very proud of is the Big Read. Through this program—the largest project ever undertaken by the National Endowment for the Arts—the En-

dowment has given grants and educational materials to 533 communities to conduct community-wide reading programs centered around a great work of fiction chosen by the community. By reaching 96 percent of the country with Big Read events and activities, 2 million attendees have been introduced to great American literature.

Through its tireless effort, the National Endowment for the Arts has solidified its relationship with Congress and the American public. I would like to recognize all of the employees at the agency for their excellent work and commitment to the arts. In particular, I would like to commend the outstanding and tireless work performed by Chairman Dana Gioia and Senior Deputy Chairman Eileen Mason. Their leadership and enthusiasm and substantive work resulted in a renaissance era at the National Endowment for the Arts. I congratulate them for a job well done.

HONORING FRESNO BUSINESS COUNCIL

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Fresno Business Council upon the celebration of their 15th anniversary. A celebration dinner will be held on Wednesday November 12, 2008 to honor this milestone.

In the early 1990s, the Greater Fresno area experienced a dramatic increase in crime rates and a severe economic downturn. As a result of the regional crisis, the morale of the entire community suffered tremendously. In response, a small group of business leaders formed an organization to address the critical issues that afflicted the region. In its beginning stages, the Fresno Business Council developed subject matter committees to address various issues such as job growth, crime and education. These specific committees were designed to obtain the research necessary to develop comprehensive action plans. A civic infrastructure was built and a network of partnerships, that crossed boundaries, was developed in support of transformational change. One of the first projects of the Fresno Business Council was the establishment of the Central Valley Business Incubator. This project, a partnership between California State University, Fresno and the Fresno Business Council, has created over one thousand jobs to date.

In 2000 "The Economic Future of the San Joaquin Valley" was issued. This report offered the Central Valley two choices; maintain the status quo by continuing the low cost path or shift to an added value economy and increase the prosperity and quality of life for everyone in the community. Following the recommendations of the report, a group of people came together to develop a plan, this estab-

lished the Collaborative Regional Initiative, CRI. CRI was a joint venture between California State University, Fresno and the Fresno Business Council. There were 5 initiatives that came out of this; insuring a state of the art technology infrastructure, increasing the number of knowledgeable workers, improving the quality of life through land use and transportation decisions, achieving high quality performance in the human services and education systems and the creation of an innovative culture. An essential element of the CRI was a commitment to a new contract for civic behavior; this contract became the "Community Values of the Fresno Region". In the end, CRI launched 26 projects that are completed, still in an implementation stage or have been absorbed by other organizations.

Fresno City Mayor Alan Autry asked his economic advisors to evaluate the city budget. They found that if more jobs were not created law enforcement would eventually consume the entire general fund. From this evaluation, the Regional Job Initiative, RJI, was launched in 2004. The RJI set a goal of 30,000 net new jobs in just 5 years. Those involved with RJI quickly realized that they would have to have strong education institutions and effective workforce preparation organizations to achieve sustainable success. Together with the networks created by CRI, the Fresno Business Council and representatives from other organizations they developed the "Choosing our Future Report", a plan to address critical issues inside Fresno Unified School District and the surrounding neighborhoods. The implementation of this plan began in 2005 and those involved have pledged at least a 3 year commitment.

The Fresno Business Council has been an essential organization of constant adaptation and with its members picking up many of the operation functions. It has proven to be a catalyst for transformational change, a merger of formerly disconnected organizations and a steward leader willing to take responsibility for helping to solve critical and systematic problems.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate the Fresno Business Council on 15 years as an outstanding organization. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing the Fresno Business Council many years of continued success.

HONORING MG RON DARDIS

HON. BRUCE L. BRALEY

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard, MG Ron Dardis, and to express gratitude for his many years of extraordinary service and leadership. General Dardis is retiring after almost 43 years of service with the Iowa National Guard. He enlisted

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

in the Iowa Air National Guard in 1966 as a jet mechanic, and has served as the top uniformed officer of the Iowa Guard for the past 9 years. As Adjutant General, he's led the Iowa Guard through the transformation from a strategic reserve to an operational force, and overseen the deployment of thousands of Iowa National Guard members to Iraq and Afghanistan. As chairman of the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission, General Dardis has also led the state's recovery efforts after this year's devastating storms. It's been my privilege to work with General Dardis on issues of importance to the Iowa Guard, including ensuring that soldiers who served in Iraq received the education benefits they deserved. It's also been an honor to work with him on our State's vital storm recovery efforts. I thank General Dardis for his invaluable service to the National Guard, the State of Iowa, and the United States, and wish him the best of luck in retirement.

HONORING EDWARD TITUS ROACH

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Edward Titus Roach of Weston, Missouri. Edward is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1249, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Edward has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Edward has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Edward Titus Roach for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TRIBUTE TO MR. DREW JUDEN

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mrs. EMERSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Drew Juden, director of the Department of Public Safety in Sikeston, Missouri, on being named 2008 Donald Red Loehr Outstanding Police Chief—the highest honor a police chief can receive in our state.

In the many years I have known Director Juden, he has been a stalwart advocate for public safety. He distinguished himself by combating drug crime in Sikeston, by formulating calm, complete responses to statewide natural disasters, and by playing a key role in preparedness exercises for a potentially serious earthquake in the New Madrid Seismic Zone, which includes Sikeston. On earthquake preparedness, Director Juden brings together local, State and Federal entities to cooperate in the face of a serious threat that could cripple

major transportation corridors, disrupt communications on a multistate basis, and interrupt energy supplies from coast to coast. Director Juden is more than a dedicated public servant, he is a leader who recognizes opportunities to think creatively to improve the systems that protect and serve our citizens.

In Sikeston, Director Juden has a reputation few police chiefs enjoy. He is widely respected, known to be fair, and trusted by everyone in the community for which he works. It is to Director Juden's credit that, as well-known and widely respected as he is, he approached his duty to the people of Sikeston and of Missouri as a public servant first.

By achieving this honor, Director Juden has earned well-deserved praise for his leadership role in law enforcement and disaster response preparedness. I sincerely hope that, by recognizing Drew Juden's many accomplishments with this award, the national law enforcement community also takes notice of the initiatives Director Juden continues to lead to keep Sikeston and other southern Missouri communities safe. I'm very proud to congratulate Drew Juden, 2008 Outstanding Police Chief for the State of Missouri, and to commend him to the U.S. House of Representatives for all of his hard work.

RECOGNIZING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF LINDEN, MICHIGAN

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating the City of Linden, Michigan, on their 20th Anniversary. A celebration will be held at Linden City Hall on Friday, December 12th.

Linden is located in southern Genesee County on the headwaters of the Shiawassee River. Consider Warner and Eben Harris built a sawmill on the river in 1840 and the village of Linden grew up around the mill. During the 1980s the residents of Linden decided to become a city and in 1988 the City of Linden was incorporated. The Charter Commission was comprised of Keith Wenger, chairperson; Judy Pieczynski, Secretary; Harvey C. Charbonneau; Robert Nellett; Doug Morgan; Marjorie Kimble; Craig Newberry; and Farrand Ward. Their goals were to provide better representation, better infrastructure, have a professional administration and still maintain the historic integrity of the town. To this end they decided on a council/manager form of government.

Over the past 20 years the City of Linden has worked to provide quality service to its residents. The city has completed 25 projects to enhance the infrastructure by paving streets and sidewalks, installing water and sewer lines, building a streetscape, façade projects, a water treatment plant, a playground and a boardwalk. The City also maintains a full-time police department, a 22-member fire department and a department of public works.

The City Council, Planning Commission and Historic District Commission work closely to preserve the historic nature of the city. They draw upon the resources of their local historian, Claude Cranston, for advice on the char-

acter of the early Linden area. In 2007 a fire destroyed a landmark historic building in the downtown area but the community pulled together to work around this loss.

Madam Speaker, please join me in applauding the City of Linden, Michigan, as the community comes together to celebrate its 20th anniversary. I congratulate the elected officials, the staff and inhabitants of this wonderful city. City Hall is centered on providing quality assistance to the residents. They have created a family friendly community rooted in the past but looking toward the future. I wish them continued success in the years ahead.

HONORING KYLE BUCK

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Kyle Buck of Kansas City, Missouri. Kyle is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1395, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Kyle has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Kyle has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Kyle Buck for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING HOLY GHOST DELIVERANCE MINISTRIES

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Madam Speaker. I rise to pay tribute and to welcome a place of solace, healing and faith that will soon be built to serve the community of St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands.

Holy Ghost Deliverance Ministries Inc. held a groundbreaking ceremony on Saturday, November 29, 2008 to commemorate the construction of a new 7,000-seat sanctuary in Estate Barren Spot, St. Croix, which will be called the City of Refuge.

The sanctuary is being built to serve all citizens of the entire Virgin Islands, and I would like to commend Senior Pastor Mona L. Barnes, Apostle Eleanor A. Estrada, and the congregation of Holy Ghost Deliverance Ministries for their vision and enduring passion for serving our community.

The church is currently building an independent living complex to provide much-needed housing for our elderly population. Fourteen of the 48 units being built will soon be dedicated and ready for occupancy.

Holy Ghost Deliverance Ministries completed in 2001 the construction of a multipurpose gymnasium, which now serves as their